

Rogue River Valley Railroad Station
Southwest corner Oregon Street and West C Street
Jacksonville
Jackson County
Oregon

HABS No. ORE-117

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PHOTOGRAPH

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY HABS No. ORE-117

ROGUE RIVER VALLEY RAILROAD STATION

Location: Southwest corner of Oregon and West C Streets,
Jacksonville, Jackson County, Oregon.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

In 1884, the Oregon and California Railroad completed its rail line south from Portland to the Oregon-California border. For the Rogue River valley portion, they selected a route along the valley floor, thus situating Jacksonville about ten miles from the nearest railroad station. Some prominent residents of the community, hoping to keep Jacksonville economically stable, formed a company to construct a railway to Medford, the new town created by the O & C railroad.¹ The right-of-way ran west along C Street to a point on the west side of Oregon Street, where the Rogue River Valley Railroad Station was built in 1891.

The local railroad line to Medford--constructed and operated by Honeyman, DeHart and Company of Portland--failed to secure Jacksonville's future, however: the grade of the rail bed was too steep for the small engines used to permit either fast service or the transport of heavy loads. Central Point, Medford, and Ashland all lay along the main line from Portland to Sacramento; all prospered at Jacksonville's expense. In addition, because the Oregon and California Railroad owned every other building in Medford, it had an incentive to encourage settlement and industry there.² The Jacksonville-Medford line was abandoned in 1925. The railroad station has been turned around since that time, but it still stands on the original site. It is now owned by the Jacksonville Museum.

FOOTNOTES

1

The original Medford and Jacksonville Railroad Company, incorporated in 1890, proved unequal to the task. The Rogue River Valley Company, incorporated the following year, issued \$100,000 in stock, divided into 1,000 shares. It began operation February 12, 1891.

2

Literally every other lot in Medford was owned by the O & C. At the time, Medford was platted as a town of about eighty blocks.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

The station is a rectangular frame structure with an L-shaped roof of two intersecting hipped sections. One of the sections projects from the east and part of the south end of the building to shelter the "platform." The south projection is supported on the outer edge by two chamfered square posts with straight brackets; the east slope of the projection, by two straight brackets extending from the east end of the building. The roof is covered with slates laid in a pattern of alternating bands of rectangular and imbricated units. An iron cresting surmounts the north-south roof ridge. The building is sheathed with narrow boarding, laid vertically to the height of a chair rail, and then horizontally above. The boarding is painted gray. The windows and doors have plain board surrounds, painted white.

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